

Message Text

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46

ACTION EB-07

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DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-02 FAA-00 ACDA-10 MC-02

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FM AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0532

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

RUFJCXAMCONSUL STRASBOURG 0028

UNCLAS BORDEAUX 0142

DEPARTMENT: ATTENTION : EUR/WE AND EB/AVIATION

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR

SUBJECT: SOCIALIST LEADER IN TOULOUSE CRITIZES US/FRENCH

AVIATION COOPERATION ON THE MERCURE 200

1. THE SOCIALIST LEADER OF TOULOUSE, ALAIN SAVARY WHO IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL OF THE MIDI-PYRENEES, AND A SOCIALIST DEPUTY IN PARLIAMENT, HAS ATTACKED THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S RECENT DECISION TO CONSTRUCT THE NEW GENERATION 'MERCURE 200' MEDIUM-RANGE PASSENGER JET PLANE IN COLLABORATION WITH MCDONNELL DOUGLAS ON THE AMERICAN SIDE AND AEROSPATIALE AND DASSAULT ON THE FRENCH SIDE. SAVARY'S MAIN CRITIQUE IS THAT THIS DECISION WILL INCREASE THE DEPENDENCE OF THE LOCAL

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ECONOMY IN TOULOUSE ON CORPORATE DECISIONS TAKEN OUTSIDE OF

THE REGION. ALSO, HE CHARGES THAT AEROSPATIALE WILL BE REDUCED TO THE ROLE OF A SUB-DEALER IN RELATION TO DASSAULT AND MCDONNELL DOUGLAS.

2. HE CLAIMS THAT THIS DECISION IS MERELY ONE OF MANY ERRORS CONCERNING AEROSPATIALE'S OPERATIONS AND CITES, AS EXAMPLES: A) MISTAKES MADE IN THE CARAVELLE PROGRAM, B) THE CONSTRUCTION AND PROGRAMING OF CONCORDE WHERE THE COSTS OF DEVELOPMENT WERE SERIOUSLY UNDER-ESTIMATED AND THE MARKET OVER-ESTIMATED, C) THE DELAYS IN LAUNCHING THE AIRBUS PROGRAM, D) THE ARTIFICIAL SEPARATION BETWEEN CIVIL AND MILITARY AVIATION CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS, THEREBY RESERVING THE LUCRATIVE MILITARY MARKET TO THE PRIVATE FIRM OF DASSAULT AND LEAVING THE NATIONALIZED AVIATION SECTOR WITH ONLY THE CIVIL AVIATION MARKET, E) THE DELAYS IN LAUNCHING COOPERATIVE EUROPEAN EFFORTS TO DEVELOP A VIABLE TRANSPORTATION POLICY, AND F) THE DIFFUSION OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY ON AVIATION MATTERS AMONG AT LEAST FOUR MINISTRIES (DEFENSE, TRANSPORTATION, FINANCE AND INDUSTRY) WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO THE PROPAGATION OF THE ERRORS MENTIONED ABOVE. SAVARY CALLS FOR CLOSE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE FRENCH AVIATION INDUSTRY AND VIABLE EUROPEAN PARTNERS. HE SAYS THAT THE 'MERCURE 200' DECISION PUTS THE EUROPEAN AVIATION INDUSTRY BEFORE A QUOTE FAIT ACCOMPLI UNQUOTE AND SERIOUSLY COMPROMISES THE CHANCES OF ANY EUROPEAN AERONAUTIC COOPERATION. SAVARY COMPARES SUCH DECISIONS IN THE AVIATION SECTOR TO WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE FRENCH COMPUTER INDUSTRY WHICH HE POINTS OUT HAS BECOME NOTHING MORE THAN A SUB-DEALER TO THE AMERICAN COMPUTER INDUSTRY.

3. COMMENT: GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AVIATION INDUSTRY LOCALLY IN THE TOULOUSE AREA WHERE IT IS A MAJOR EMPLOYER OF MANPOWER, SAVARY'S ATTACK AGAINST THE GOF'S DECISION ON 'MERCURE 200' HAS OBVIOUS POLITICAL OVERTONES. SAVARY WAS RECENTLY CHOSEN AS THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S MAIN CANDIDATE TO RUN FOR THE MAYORALITY SEAT IN TOULOUSE IN 1978 IN AN EFFORT TO UNSEAT THE PRESENT INCUMBENT, PIERRE BAUDIS, WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAINS INDEPENDANTS. SAVARY MAKES NO MENTION OF SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORTATION CAVAILLE'S RECENT REFERENCES TO THE EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL OF THIS DEAL WHICH CAVAILLE STATES SHOULD ASSURE WORK FOR FOUR THOUSAND FRENCH

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